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Bullets for Bread

Government forces apparently have smashed the worst of the rioting that already has cost as many as a thousand lives in Poznan in east-central Poland, but despite ruthless methods of suppression, reports seep through the Iron Curtain that protest meetings continue. After all the words of sweetness and light coming out of Soviet Russia, the fact remains that force is required to keep the "people's democracies" in Soviet satellites from coming ungilded.

Poland, with a long and honorable history against oppression, but dominated by this power or that through many centuries of its existence, has added a new chapter in its struggle for freedom. It is not a pretty chapter, and the revolt was put down by the only method known to tyrants — blood and bullets. All the rioters wanted was bread.

East German workers in 1953 received the same treatment when they rioted in East Berlin and other cities in Red-held Germany, and to prove that there is no favoritism within Russia itself, it was the same kind of punishment inflicted earlier this year in the Soviet province of Georgia, home of demoted-hero Stalin.

The official "line" in Poland is to explain that workers throughout this unhappy land are "indignant" over the riots in Poznan, and to blame United States agents as provocateurs of the embarrassment. Allan Dulles, head of the Central Intelligence Agency and brother of the head of the U.S. State Dept., is the man singled out for "plotting" the uprising. That will be a bit difficult for the Poles to swallow. Polish heroes have been rebelling against oppression long before the Communists extended their domination over Polish territory.

Contented people do not protest against constituted authority, at least to the extent of walking unarmed into machine-gun fire.